

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday May 2, 2023 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chair, District 1
Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2
Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC, District 3

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via Zoom. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note taker comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://countywatch.org> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see:

https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or decisions:

Public Comments: Meetings, special meetings, and significant action should be publicized better since a lot of Okanogan County folks don't have computers. News releases might be helpful and/or mailing.

Discussion of code revisions/policy changes with the Civil Deputy-removing things that are obsolete.

Civil Deputy will work on resolutions and/or ordinances to codify changes. Things like office hours need to be updated for all departments. BOCC is the legislative body to determine these. There are some rules/regulations that come from the Health District.

Team Okanogan to come to BOCC next week.

Discussion of whether to assess a misdemeanor or infraction for non-compliance with Planning.

Public Works Update: Maintenance & road conditions, Owhi Lake, Bonaparte Lake, Seal Creek, Wolf Creek, upcoming projects – speed reduction for Barnholt Loop Road requested. Waiting for sale of

Hunter Mounting acquisition to close. First draft of 2024-2029 road project list in draft form.

Okanogan Homeless Coalition looking for funds to continue construction.

Meeting adjourned at 11:52

9:04

JN and AH begin the meeting, begin working on previous proceedings.

9:13

CB arrives

9:15

Public Comment: Unidentified Man (UM) came to the microphone to state that Zoom has been going on for quite a while now. He felt that Zoom should have been published better. He has talked with

numerous people in the County, and they don't know what has been happening in the County, especially with the Re-Zoning.

A Mr. Eubanks and Cheryl Curtis were also in the audience and were asked whether they wanted to make a comment, to which they stated not then.

AH responds to the Public Comment re-zoning. We haven't gone out to the public on the zoning process, yet. You will be notified in the (Oroville) Gazette, and there will be a public comment period. The UM asks that it is not set in stone yet? To which AH responded no. This will be going through the Planning Commission, and you can attend via Zoom. UM states, "I don't have a computer." AH states there has not even been a legal notice yet.

Pete Palmer (PP), Planning Director, also responds to the comment. "an article has been published in 3 newspapers for Public Comment period. It links to the website. UM – that is the problem, a lot of people don't have computers. PP tells UM that he can stop by the Planning Office today and she will give him more information. When there is a Public Hearing that it will be at 7 PM.

AH also states that zoning has changed in the Tunk.

CB states that we (BOCC) should get into a conversation as to what and why the Tunk Valley zoning changed. CB also states that any of the notice issues or discrepancies in the past are getting fixed. CB suggests that a couple of news releases might help people understand the Tunk Re-Zone.

9:25

Cheryl Curtis (CC) (member of the Public) stated that when the City of Okanogan is making any changes, they send every landowner a notice by mail. CB responded there would be about 715 landowners affected and that would be a big mailing, and a lot more, if to everyone in the county. CB also acknowledges that there are some things that could warrant a mailing and he understands the different town processes as he has worked for all the different towns in the county.

9:27

Larry Gilman, County Assessor, in to report they have received their new car for the office and needs to know what to do with the 2006 Ford Explorer with 130,000 miles on it. He has the keys and the title. BOCC will see if it can be utilized by another department before having it go to the Surplus Auction.

9:30

Esther Millner (EM), Civil Deputy Prosecutor in to discuss code revisions as there are a lot of things in the code that are obsolete. EM had sent an e-mail to the BOCC re: legal notices. EM put together a draft resolution identifying issues and giving ideas on how we can address these. She would like to get it corrected sooner than later.

9:53

CB states that he got a letter from EM. EM states that was another issue altogether. It is about needing to adjust office hours. The BOCC needs to put something in stone or give flexibility to the different departments. The Fairgrounds, for instance, is open until 4:00.

The e-mail I sent is covering issues that I see as issues states EM. I can look at an ordinance if you want me to codify hours. There are some variations like the Coroner – by appointment, leave voice mails, because it is an on-call position. Emergency Services may be similar. Central Services is not open to the public, but they may need to be part of the code.

CB states that we would want to be sure people are notified. We need Monday – Friday hours posted on the County website.

EM states that you probably want to cover holidays (days offices are closed) and the other issue of some offices being closed for lunch, while others are not. Also, there are potential changes – temporary

AH offers there are 2 things that need to be included; severe weather events and natural disasters.
CB states that each office has its special challenges, but I think we can establish parameters.

9:44

AH states and there are safety issues. Maybe the BOCC office could be notified – all temporary changes go through the BOCC.

EM states there are trainings that happen and notice could be given in advance for that.

AH states that basically the elected officers and department heads have the ability to make temporary changes.

EM asks if the preliminary draft is acceptable.

AH states the key word I responsible. Could you re-draft the resolution and send it out to the offices for their review?

EM states yes, and is the Board comfortable with the format? AH likes things in Resolution form, establishing the policy. The previous resolution was from 1958.

EM states that she is actually recommending leaving the Code out. However, CB states that we set the hours (making policy) by the Code. Codified or Policy?

CB states that there are a minimum of hours within the Code.

9:59

AH states that the only problem with Policy is that it gets lost. To which CB answers, the Code or Resolution is the framework. That is why we're doing an update to the Code.

EM- De-codifying or amending it? I can bring something next week.

CB my proposal is by resolution. We're not going to say there is no policy. We just need to modify when needed.

10:03

EM suggests looking at Title 3 – Tax Revenue and Finance. CB states this should include Auditor and Treasurer, especially in regard to the different fee schedules. CB- we set fees and then they change as in the Fair.

LJ states however, they are all set by Resolution and regularly updated.

EM the Planning Department also. I will look into how other counties are doing it. Everything has to be looked at within the State law.

10:26

The Health District also has their own set of rules and regulations per CB. EM will look at other Counties with Health Districts vs Health Departments.

10:40

AH looking into some of the regulations within the Title 3 Sections. For instance, on all short plats or long plats there shall be a disclaimer on farm or range operations. They are not to be considered a nuisance. AH states open space agriculture, open space timber, and Critical areas are all in this chapter.

10:45

EM will get Planning Director's input. What about hawkers and auctioneer license fees? These probably need updating. Nightly rentals? Per CB, no this is more recent.

CB offers that there is a group coming to see BOCC next week – Team Okanogan. @2:00 on Monday.

10:52

EM wants to establish whether a misdemeanor and infraction is warranted for not complying with planning regulations. Maybe leave a misdemeanor on the books as a last resort.

EM will go back to the drawing board and come back with resolutions/ideas.

11:01

LJ states that the Auditor will be in this afternoon for guidance on the Public Health quarterly payment.

11:06

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer updates BOCC on the maintenance and road conditions. There are still problems at Owhi Lake but working with the Tribe to resolve. We will probably need to put in a larger culvert. Work is continuing Seal Creek. Will need to replace that culvert but can't get to it yet. The Wolf Creek Road is closed due to high water and debris flow. Bonaparte Creek Road culvert is not plugged, but there is too much water for the culvert. There is a private road in Mazama, across from Lost River Road – water going over roadway. Maurice Goodall has some pictures of the flooding recently. JT states there are no easy solutions for this.

JT reports receiving a petition to reduce the speed limit on Barnholt Loop Road. Will need to hold a public hearing.

JT reports on projects; Gravel crush starting tomorrow – Gavin Pit may be first.

Shops are still moving, but slow.

The Old Hwy 97 Project.

Twisp River Overlay

Landfill project still going

both Transfer stations are complete.

The asphalt pad @landfill moving ahead.

JT reports that the Hunter Mountain Acquisition by WDFW will likely close next month – working with Esther Milner, Civil Atty.

JT has a draft of the 2024-2029 Road Projects list. Will bring that forward next week.

Federally funded or regionally significant make the list, and it's easier to change funding when on the list.

JN asks JT how Hwy 20 snow clearing is going. They are hoping to be open by Mother's Day, which is a week later this year.

11:30

LJ brings up some issues. Voucher needs to be removed from Consent Agenda.

There are some new resumes received for the Water Conservancy Board, with one vacancy.

Okanogan Community Homeless Shelter would like a purchase order to get the materials from Valley Lumber. AH wants to be sure to see the invoice and see that it matches the purchase order.

11:38

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to go into executive Session to evaluate a public employee until 11:50

11:52

Adjourn until the afternoon session.